

So we believe in lower lesser courts of authority and we leave room for the miraculous work of the holy spirit. Now some of you will have resistance to this and let me tell you why, this will be very controversial, it may be because you are worldly. **Cessationism is worldliness**. Let me explain it to you, you've got Renee Descartes "Cogito ergo sum", I think therefore I am. In an effort to defend Christianity from some of its critics, he begins with his epistemological presupposition: "Where will I start? I think therefore I am". So the two founding, if you look at this like a Jenga game, the first two pieces that get laid down in something called the **modernistic enlightenment project**, individualism and rationalism. "I think", that's in "I'm an individual and my mind, my brain, the three pounds of me between my ears", that is the essence of what it means to possess the "Imago dei", to bear the image and likeness of God. Out of that what invariably comes is the modern enlightenment project, based upon individualism and rationalism. Now, **out of this comes as well skepticism**, after a while you start reading in the Bible, "Jesus walked on water?". You start becoming skeptical of supernatural claims. So it's like William Barclay come[sic] along "well maybe he's walking along the shore of the water and it look like he was walking on the water", we're trying to find ways to explain away what the Bible says plainly. Because it doesn't fit cleanly within a modernistic, rationalistic uh paradigm of thinking. So in that way Christians start thinking more like Hume than C.S. Lewis. Alright?



Hume is really the modern rationalistic thinker who set in motion opposition to the supernatural, to the miraculous. So it starts with rationalism, individualism as part of modernism, this leads to skepticism, right?. If there is a God, then God created the world, and to use the language of Al Pacino in the devil's advocate, he's now an absentee landlord, and that he's left us here and he's governing life as we know it by a set of laws; but he's so sovereign that he's gone, he's not transcendent and imminent, just gone. What happens then is the assumption is made that none of these natural laws can be violated, therefore **the supernatural is impossible if not unlikely**.

This plays itself out in three ways: Number one, there's atheism. There is no God, there is no

supernatural, there is nothing beyond the physical material world that can be objectively tested and retested according to scientific methodology. There is a vestige of modernism that tries to accommodate the spiritual aspect and it becomes deism. Where there is a God but this "god" is not involved in our world, he doesn't break in and violate natural law; the supernatural is not possible. This is Thomas Jefferson who sits down on the white house with a set of scissors and cuts all of the miracles out of the bible and publishes something called The Philosophy of Jesus Christ. This includes Unitarians, this includes very liberal mainline so called Christian denominations who are basically deists. There is a god, he is far away, doesn't have anything to do with us and the miracles can all be explained away, they are primitive, superstition, myths, misunderstandings. So it goes to Atheism, Deism and this will be controversial, Cessationism.

Now you know why I haven't said this publicly, I'm not sure I have a helmet big enough to deal with it, I'm gonna get battered a lot. But I believe that a result of modernistic worldliness in Christian form is hard cessationism. And that is saying: God could do a miracle but He doesn't and He won't, but He could. So within that God's not really speaking, God's not really working and the supernatural gifts are not in operation; Healing, revelation, speaking in tongues, those kinds of things they are over in the God-used-to box. Even though I was reading this book that said he was the same yesterday, today and forever.

And so their argument even comes down to 1st Corinthians 13 which gets turned into origami, right? When the perfect comes the imperfect disappears, we'll see him face to face, the perfect is Jesus. The perfect is Jesus. But then what happens is, to defend this sort of modernistic rationalistic, cessationistic position, we throw up the craziest cooks in the charismatic camp and say well you don't want that do ya? uh no, no we don't. If it's nothing or that it's a real coin flip, cause neither is the real win.

So again, let me say this, it's also that the charismatic kooks have really ruined it for the rest of us, and prosperity theology has made it even worst. Because now that charismatic theology and pentecostal theology has largely associated itself with get-rich-quick schemes and greed, and the love of mammon, it really puts us in a position where those of us who love the Bible and say miracles happen. And, and they'll make weird arguments too like "there is no evidence of miracles in the early church". There are, alright? Pastor Justin Holcomb and I are working on a book on this and gone

through all the early church fathers, and yeah the supernatural continued there was no breaking period, you've all been duh, you know, sort of lied to I think and the research has not been done well. But we don't want sort of a prosperity theology, we also don't want a theology that undermines my second point, complementarian ecclesiology. And what really gets off lying is when spiritual gifts are emphasized over spiritual fruit. There is a difference between spiritual giftedness and spiritual maturity. You could say "I'm a prophet", you are an immature, selfish, goofy prophet, alright? So you just can't pull out the prophet, you know, t-shirt and walk around telling people what to do. Because in addition to spiritual gifts we believe in spiritual fruits, spiritual character, we also believe in spiritual authority. And so the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets, and even those who believe they have something from the lord, it's tested and approved by the elders of the church. So again, the spirit-filled is under the complementarian. Which is ultimately under the reformed theology. Somebody says they've experienced something, seen something, got a revelation of something, if the elders disagree the answer is no and if it's not in-line with Christ-centered, God-exalting, biblical theology then it's to be rejected. But we are not to treat prophecies with what? contempt. Certain theological systems by definition do. And we know there will be false prophets and false teachers and false apostles. The Bible tells us that it's not just shepherds and sheep, there are also wolves. Which requires elders in the church godly, qualified, competent, capable, biblical, humble male leaders to be the umpires making the decisions on these issues, and how the gifts are practiced in the church.

So what I would like to argue for is spirit-filled theology and I think this helps us get away from modernistic rationalistic thinking. Again in addition to cessationism, charismatic theology suffers from some of the same errors of modernism, right?. **Functional cessationism is really about the mind, but functional charismatic theology is really about the heart.** One is really about what you think, the other is about what you feel. And what happens in that is that wrongly held charismatic and pentecostal, and even continuationistic theology, it becomes incredibly self-centered, it's about my gift, my experience, my word, my contribution, my authority. What we're talking about in the spirit-filled theology is different. Let me explain to you what I mean by this.

Right now I'm half way through preaching the entire book of Luke, it's gonna take a few years. And Luke is a prequel and the book of Acts is a sequel. Both written by Luke, this historian and medical doctor, who's traveling companion perhaps position to and friends with the apostle Paul. And Luke as

you know was funded I believe by Theophilus a wealthy and affluent benefactor and he permits uh Luke to take the time to go interview the eye-witnesses and to put together under the ministry of the Holy Spirit a perfect, inerrant, accounting of the life of Jesus in Luke and the ministry of his people in the book of acts, prequel and sequel. And I see this is biblical theology and I've said this before so if you've heard it I apologize, um but the way I see it is this, there's a lot of supernatural miraculous ministry happening around the birth of Jesus. Elizabeth becomes pregnant, an angel shows up to speak to her husband Zechariah. Uh additionally Mary is enabled to conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit, an angel shows up to articulate this to Joseph. There's a lot of supernatural, angelic, Holy Spirit work around the birth of Jesus.

Jesus is born, and then we see him grow up, he grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with men and God. And then this significant event happens at the baptism of Jesus Christ. And at the Baptism of Jesus, you all know the story, the entire trinitarian God of the Bible is present. God the Father speaks from Heaven, God the Son is brought up out of the water and God the Holy Spirit descends upon the Jesus in the form of a dove and this is the public declaration, inauguration of the ministry of Jesus and this is God's way of saying He's the one. "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased". He hadn't been preaching, teaching, healing yet, he hadn't died, and risen, and atoned for the sin of the world. Jesus was the beloved son of God, the second member of the trinity from eternity past. And God the Father says, He's the one, He's the one. And then in one of the other gospels, I think it's Mark's gospel. As this baptismal account of Jesus is told, there is an interesting additional piece that Mark contributes, and that is, that the Holy Spirit rested upon Jesus in this continuing, ongoing, uh ministerial capacity; so that we are to see that Jesus is led by the Holy Spirit, empowered by the Holy Spirit, enabled by the Holy Spirit and this is exactly what Luke says. As you keep reading, the gospel of Luke it says Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit out of the wilderness. That Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, that he keeps coming back to remind us of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of Jesus.

Now I don't want to get too far down this theological rabbit trail, but the question is often posed, how did Jesus do his ministry life on the earth? His you know, hypostatic union, one person two natures: fully man, fully God. We believe that, we believe that. But the question is, how does Jesus cast out demons? how does Jesus perform miracles? How does Jesus preach and teach with authority? Some will say "well he did that as God". Jesus on the earth was continually God, unceasingly God. But,

they make a caveat, sometimes he works out of his deity, out of his divinity. For example, when he forgives sin. That's actually the accusation that's made "Jesus how can you forgive sin? only God can comitt[sic] sin", I mean, the psalmist said it rightly "against you only lord God have I sinned". We've sinned against God, God's the one that needs to forgive us, when Jesus forgives someone he's doing the work of God. But Jesus we're told in the Hebrews was also tempted. We know that Jesus also suffered. And he wasn't just faking it, he did so fully human. And this is, this is one of those great mysteries of our faith, fully God fully man. Jesus really did suffer, He really was tempted, even though he never did sin. And on occasion he worked out of his divinity but he never did so to benefit himself. He did sort of benefit others but not himself. He lived as we live. Hungry, tempted, criticized, suffering, bleeding, dying. How did he do it? I would submit to you that he did not lose his divinity, he retained it fully. But he didn't continually avail himself to the full use of His divine attributes. let me give you an example: God is omnipresent in the incarnation, Jesus was in a place; God is immutable and unchanging, Jesus grew in wisdom, stature and favor with men and God; God doesn't learn anything He's all knowing and omniscient, Jesus in humbling himself becoming a man he learned as we learn, we see him studying with the other leaders at the temple for example. So how did He do it? He did it by the power of the Holy Spirit. Philippians 2 talks about Jesus, verses 5 through 11 Jesus humbling himself, talking upon the form of a servant, and by the power of the Holy Spirit living his life.

Here's what it means to be Spirit-filled: it means to live a life patterned after Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. Where we get in trouble with charismatic and pentecostal theology is we lift up the Holy man of God, the anointed man. If his name is not Jesus, it's the wrong man. It's the wrong man. Jesus is the perfect man, Jesus is the God-man. Right? Jesus is the Savior, he's also the example. He saves us from sin, sends us the Holy Spirit, so we might live a life patterned after his. This is a life of courage and humility. It's a life of courage that it's willing to do as Jesus did, be fully committed to the mission of God and a ministry and a life of humility. It's not our power that compels us, and it's not our glory that we long for.

Now what this allows us to do is have a Christ-centered, spirit-filled theology. And as you read the storyline of Luke it then goes to acts; And as you go to the book of Acts, uh, Luke this master storyteller, inspired by the Holy Spirit, he shows the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus Christ in our place for our sins as our penal substitute savior, believe all of it, gladly. And then Jesus says you need to go

tell people about what I've done. You need to be my witnesses, you need to go get this good news out. But he says don't go just yet, first wait for the Holy Spirit. And then we see the Holy Spirit descending on the church on the day of Pentecost just as the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus at the day of his baptism. Now this is not an accident. Luke, I would say ultimately the Holy Spirit through Luke, is showing us that Jesus' life and ministry was done by the Holy Spirit, the Church's ministry is supposed to continue and be sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit. They were doing the ministry of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God and it's communal not individual. The Holy Spirit descends upon the church, empowering and enabling the church for mission. To be spirit-filled is to be like Jesus together on mission. That's what it means to be Spirit-filled. Now if you explain this to your people, say "I want you to be Spirit-filled" they're like "uhh you're freaking me out", "like Jesus!" OK that sounds great. You see the difference? otherwise what happens in pentecostal theology and charismatic theology is sometimes the cross is really secondary and the day of Pentecost is really the big deal. And what happens on the day of Pentecost is that the work of the cross is applied by the power of the Spirit. So it's not a greater event, its the application of the greatest event: the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. That allows us to be cross-centered , Christ-centered, mission-focused, Spirit-filled. That's what we mean by a Spirit-filled theology. This includes as well, and I'll say this briefly, an understanding that as you are filled with the Holy Spirit as God's people and community under authority on mission, you will encounter the demonic. Reformed guys don't know what to do with the demons. We don't know. We say things like, we're against them. That's basically, that's basically our demonology. We don't like them. OK great! that's a good place to start. But we don't know what to do with the demonic, we don't know what to do with people who are oppressed. We don't know what to do with people who are suicidal. We don't know what to do with people who are believing habitual lies and accusations and condemnations. We struggle with the demonic. And so what happens in the reformed world it's all the flesh and the world, we don't know what to do with the devil, to use Martin Luther's distinction between those three sources of Spiritual opposition. So one of the areas that is sort of culminating and ruminating is what does it really mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? And as we're on mission and we see people who don't just have just theological or just psychological problems, they've got Spiritual problems. What do we do? Does the Bible have anything for them and this is what we see in the life and ministry of Jesus and the early church as God's people

are filled with the Spirit on mission like Jesus they have demonic opposition and it's real and some of you church planters don't believe that. You just think if I call people to repent of sin and preach the Bible it's gonna go great. It will and there will be great opposition. You really do have an enemy, the words warfare and battle in the Bible are not an overstatement. It's real. So Reformed theology, complementarian relationships, Spirit-filled lives; I feel inclined to say one thing too, tomorrow I'm going to unpack all the teams on this, but you reformed guys especially you who are more Presbyterian, **you tend to ignore the Holy Spirit and attribute everything the Spirit does to the gospel.** "The gospel has power, the gospel saves, the gospel, the gospel, the gospel" only if applied by the Holy Spirit. And so you can't just talk about everything the gospel does, because apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, people are blind, hard-hearted, deaf, resistant, stubborn, totally depraved. So be careful you're not always just saying the gospel, the gospel, the gospel, make sure to teach your people the gospel with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

*-- Excellent Transcription provided by @Mo0nangel*